

# Cow Culture

Just as the cow converts grass into milk, we have to convert negatives into positives, writes MAULANA WAHIDUDDIN KHAN



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*We have to develop in our personality what may be called the capacity for conversion; we have to turn negative experiences into positive thinking.*

In the 1930s, I was a student of a village madrasa in Uttar Pradesh. There I studied an Urdu Reader, in which there was a poem composed by the well-known poet, Ismail Meerathi. It was titled *Hamari Gaye — Our Cow*. One of the verses went like this: *Kal jo ghas chari thi ban mein, Doodh bani woh gaye ke than mein.*

It means that the cow is a special kind of animal. It takes grass and in return gives us milk. In other words, the cow is a divine industry which is able to convert 'non-milk' into milk. This poem became a part of my memory. It taught me a great lesson. God, the creator, has made the cow a model for human behaviour in that it gives us a lesson in high morality. We must develop this quality of conversion in our personality, so that we may convert negative thought into positive thought.

It is said that man is a social animal. But what is society? Society is full of differences. Every day we experience some provocative situation, every day we face some unwanted behaviour from others, and every day we suffer anger and tension because of conflicts arising out of differences.

Then what to do? The cow is the answer. God has created a model in the form of the cow. We have to adopt cow culture, we have to develop in our personality what may be

called the capacity for conversion; we have to turn negative experiences into positive thinking.

The fact is that everyone enjoys freedom. But everyone is free to misuse his freedom. It is this misuse of freedom that creates problems. As we cannot abolish people's freedom, we have no option but to learn the art of problem management.

The present world is a testing ground. Every man and woman here is being tested. If they have freedom it is because, without freedom, there can be no test. The freedom is God-given, and as such, no one has the license to abolish it. Thus we have no option but to follow the cow pattern. The cow culture means learning the art of anger management, learning the art of converting anger into forgiveness, learning the art of converting anger into peaceability.

Leaving society and going to the jungle or the mountains is a lower form of spirituality. The higher form of spirituality is that which is demonstrated by the cow. We have to live with people, experience all kinds of unwanted behaviour from others, but try not to react negatively. You have to imitate the cow. Just as the cow converts grass into milk, you have to convert negative thought into positive thought. This is the highest form of spirituality.

Most men and women are battling stress. They ask what is the way to de-stress. I would suggest that they learn a lesson from the cow. They should adopt the cow habit in their affairs and they will be able to de-stress themselves quite successfully. The cow represents an elevated form of lifestyle. Adopt this lifestyle, and you will be able to enjoy a tension-free life. ■

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